

Frequently Asked Questions

Suboxone® (buprenorphine/naloxone)/Subutex® (buprenorphine)

1. I have been taking Suboxone for quite a while. Do I still need a prior authorization?

Yes, all prescriptions for these agents require a prior authorization (PA) beginning August 1, 2010. The pharmacist can make the first call – one time only - during the transition period that ends on 10/31/2010. After that, the doctor must complete the approved PA form and submit it to the Rational Drug Therapy Program (RDTP).

2. How long does it take to get a PA reviewed?

It takes about 2 hours for RDTP to process the PA request and fax the response back to the doctor.

3. I have never taken Suboxone before. What is the highest dose I can have covered?

If you have never take Suboxone or Subutex in the past, your doctor may want you to take a dose higher than 16mg per day as you start treatment. WV Medicaid covers up to 24mg per day for the first 60 days of treatment. After this initial period, no more than 16mg per day may be covered.

4. What if my patient drops out of treatment and needs to start at the higher dose again?

Medicaid will only pay for the higher dose once.

5. I am currently being treated by a doctor who does not accept West Virginia Medicaid. What can I do?

West Virginia Medicaid is observing a 90-day grace period in order for everyone to adjust to the new policy rules. The grace period begins on 8/1/2010 and ends on 10/31/2010. This grace period will give your current doctor time to enroll with Medicaid or give you time to find a new doctor who accepts Medicaid. Prescriptions must still have prior authorization before they can be covered. You can ask your pharmacist to make the first call for your PA during the 90-day grace period.

6. How do I find a doctor that takes the WV Medicaid card and can prescribe Suboxone or Subutex?

WV Medicaid's Client Services department can tell you which doctors are enrolled in your area. You can call Client Services at their telephone number, 800-642-8589. Molina Medicaid Solutions also has a call center for Medicaid members at 888-483-0797.

7. I am a non-enrolled physician and am considering enrolling with West Virginia Medicaid. How do I enroll?

Provider enrollment services are handled by Molina Medicaid Solutions and can be reached by telephone at 888-483-0793, option 3. Enrollment criteria must be met before a provider will be enrolled. This may include limitations based on proximity to the state border.

8. I am a doctor and prescribe Suboxone and Subutex. For newly started patients, can I order more than a 7-day supply of medication?

You may prescribe a quantity of medication that is appropriate for the patient. However, the pharmacy can dispense no more than a 7-day supply when dispensing the medication for new patients. If these patients are compliant after 90 days of treatment, they may then receive up to a 14-day supply of medicine. If these patients continue to be compliant after an additional 90 days, they may receive up to a 30-day supply of medicine at the pharmacy.

Established patients may get up to a 30-day supply of medication, provided they have been compliant with treatment.

9. How often is a PA required for treatment with Suboxone or Subutex?

Newly started patients will need a new PA every 90 days.

Established patients may receive a 6-month PA.

10. I have been taking Xanax, Valium, and Ambien. Will Medicaid still cover these while I am also taking Suboxone?

Since there are dangerous side effects when taking these with Suboxone, Medicaid will not cover drugs like Xanax, Valium, and Ambien while Medicaid is covering Suboxone.

11. What is the proper technique for taking Subutex and Suboxone?

Subutex and Suboxone are not active if swallowed whole or chewed. Each tablet or strip must be allowed to dissolve under the tongue for 2 to 10 minutes with no talking, drinking, or swallowing. Suboxone sublingual film should not be moved after placement.